April 15, 1969

Dear Art,

On those of the nights on which I go to bed on which I count my blessings, do you think I thank God for the underground press which finds it impossible to mentions underground books (even s single time) while busily engaged in publicizing competitive commercial ones (and dated ones at that)?

My own reading of this press for which I had hoped so much tells me it has become its own kind of establishment, its own kind of commercialism, hence its own kind of failure, its own kind of betrayal of freedom of the press.

And uncritical! Sycophantic and unthinking!

We do not help our friends by telling them they are right and wonderful when they are wrong and hurtful. I mean this specifically, in two applications. This is neither friendship nor responsibility, either.

By now, especially when I have not seen those promised sensations and revelations in your paper, you are wondering how to spend the wages of sycophancy. You cannot join the wolfpack, for that would be wrong, it also is no way to treat a friend, and also does not help. And you cannot write the stories, because they would be false.

The day I was to have met you for lunch, the date you didn't keep and didn't bother to break, you might have learned what might have saved you what you should now find very embarrassing. Ask Steve Burton, who also would not listen. And how kind you were: that was one of several sleepless nights that trip, and on those trips there was rarely more than two or three hours of sleep per night.

Yet on that same trip you ordered copies of my still-unknown, still fresh, and very underground book PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH. You were going to promote it, sell it in your stores. You have more sensations in that book that are true and vieble than in all the crap you found space for that almost without exception was the most awful trash and nonsense. Remember, I told you you could reproduce the until-then supressed documents if you gave proper credit. If you have mentioned the book once, even in your adds that youxplace in your own paper, it has escaped my attention. You did print a paid-for classified add asking where another of my books could be obtained. That book? The only one with the unquestioned fact about New Orlean An entirely original book, loaded with fact and sensation, and unknown to your readers and book customers. Need I remind you what, thanks to your paper, they do "know"?

Because of such eminently fair treatment by your paper and the others of the "underground" (all of which have been only too happy to print under the name of another what was blatantly stolen), I now have three books in limited editions, unable to print them. And they are hot!

The past cannot be undone or relived. I would like to see some of those responsible atone to the degree possible.

I have written you about this in the past without response. You owe

me for those books still. I enclose your March 5, 1968 note that acknowledges receipt. I would appreciate it if you could now pay this promptly. My need, as always, is urgent, and it is long overdue.

I also regret you never found it possible to line up a speaking engagement. You do not know how I communicate with that kind of audience - yet without lies, manufactures, distortions - with solid material you have yet to hear seriously questioned.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg